

REMARKS**INTRODUCTION:**

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 4, 5, 6 and 18 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 7 and 17 have been amended. No new matter is being presented, and approval and entry are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 7-17 and 19-25 are pending and under consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR IN CLAIM 7:

A typographical error has been corrected in claim 7. Applicants apologize for the error.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

In the Office Action, at page 2-3, numbered paragraph 2, claims 1-5, 7-17 and 19-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yializis (USPN 6,706,412; hereafter, Yializis) in view of Matsuo et al. (USPN 5,645,923; hereafter, Matsuo), Woolley et al. (USPN 5,935,662; hereafter, Woolley) and Nagai et al. (USPN 6,106,933; hereafter, Nagai). The reasons for the rejection are set forth in the Office Action and therefore not repeated. The rejection is traversed and reconsideration is requested.

In accordance with the Examiner's suggestion (see allowable claims below), claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claims 5 and 6, and claim 17 has been amended to include the features of claim 18. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1 and 17 are in allowable form.

Since claims 2-3, 7-16 and 19-25 depend from amended claims 1 and 17, respectively, amended claims 1 and 17 are submitted to be allowable for at least the reasons that amended claims 1 and 17 are submitted to be allowable.

Thus, the rejection of claims 1-5, 7-17 and 19-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Yializis (USPN 6,706,412) in view of Matsuo et al. (USPN 5,645,923), Woolley et al. (USPN 5,935,662) and Nagai et al. (USPN 6,106,933) is now moot.

ALLOWABLE CLAIMS:

Claims 6 and 18 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base

claim and any intervening claims.

In accordance with the Examiner's suggestion, claim 1 has been amended to include the features of claims 5 and 6, and claim 17 has been amended to include the features of claim 18. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1 and 17 are in allowable form.

Since claims 2-3, 7-16 and 19-25 depend from amended claims 1 and 17, respectively, amended claims 1 and 17 are submitted to be allowable for at least the reasons that amended claims 1 and 17 are submitted to be allowable.

CONCLUSION:

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding objections and rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot, and further, that all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. Thus, there being no further outstanding objections or rejections, the application is submitted as being in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any remaining issues to be addressed, it is believed that prosecution can be expedited by the Examiner contacting the undersigned attorney for a telephone interview to discuss resolution of such issues.

If there are any underpayments or overpayments of fees associated with the filing of this Amendment, please charge and/or credit the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Date: August 10, 2005 By: Darleen J. Stockley
Darleen J. Stockley
Registration No. 34,257

1201 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501